

REMARKS

I. Introduction

Claims 1-25 are pending in the present application, and claims 5, 6 and 9-19 are withdrawn; claims 1, 2, 4, 7, 8 and 20-25 are rejected; and claim 3 is objected to. In response, claims 1-6 and 8-25 have been amended; claim 7 has been canceled; and new claims 26-27 have been added.

Applicant notes with appreciation the acknowledgment of the claim for foreign priority and the acknowledgment that all certified copies of the priority documents have been received. Applicant also notes with appreciation the acceptance of drawings which were previously submitted.

II. Claim Objections

Claim 2 has been amended to address the informality indicated in the Office Action. Therefore, the objection to claim 2 should now be withdrawn.

III. Rejection of Claims 1, 2, 4, 7, 8 and 21-25 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 1, 2, 4, 7, 8 and 21-25 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Japanese Patent No. 590113421 ("Utagawa").

In response, claim 1 has been amended to limit the first optical element as having at least one surface with a refractive power. Utagawa discloses and shows a rectangular prism with all its surfaces being plane surfaces (Fig.10). In this way, Utagawa is different in structure from the subject matter of claim 1 reciting that the chemical substance is sandwiched between one optical surface of the first optical element having at least one surface with a refractive power and one optical surface of the second optical element. Therefore, amended claim 1 is allowable over Utagawa.

For the same reasons, claims 2, 4, 21, 23, 24 and 25, which depend from claim 1, also are allowable. (Each of claims 24 and 25 is amended to depend only from claim 1 to obviate multi dependency).

Claim 7 has been cancelled, and claim 8 has been rewritten as an independent claim, to recite the configuration described in page 45, line 27 - page 46, line 13 of the specification and shown in FIG. 10. Utagawa discloses a structure in which a reflecting surface of the

prism is contacted with the chemical substance, while, claim 8 recites that the prism is contacted, at an exit surface thereof, with the chemical substance. Therefore, amended claim 8 is allowable over Utagawa.

Claim 22 is limited to recite that the optical system and the electronic imaging element satisfy the condition $F > a$. Utagawa fails to disclose such a numerical condition. Therefore, amended claim 22 is allowable over Utagawa. Accordingly, new claims 26 and 27, which correspond to original claims 24/22 and 25/22, respectively, also are allowable.

IV. Rejection of Claim 20 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claim 20 has been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Japanese Patent No. 590113421 ("Utagawa").

Since base claim 8 has been amended to recite the structure not disclosed in Utagawa as discussed above, even if Utagawa's device is modified to make the prism of a material having a refractive index of 1.68 or greater, this does not lead to the subject matter of claim 20.

For at least the foregoing reasons, the obviousness rejection of claim 20 should be withdrawn.

V. Allowable Subject Matter

Claim 3 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but the Office action states it would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

In response, claim 3 is rewritten in independent form so as to place it in allowable condition.

VI. Conclusion

For the preceding reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all the outstanding rejections have been overcome and that the application is in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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